CLAIMS

1.   A method of optimising connection set-up times between nodes in a centrally controlled network; the method comprising sending a path set-up request from a node to a controller; if a connection cannot be made at a requested time, not sending a no acknowledgement message, but only sending an acknowledgment message from the controller to the node, when the network connection has been established.

2.   A method according to claim 1, wherein the node implements a queuing system whilst waiting for the acknowledgement, such that IP packets received at the node whilst awaiting a connection are discarded in accordance with the queuing system.

3.   A method according to claim 2, wherein the queuing scheme comprises one of first in first out (FIFO), last in first out (LIFO), or weighted fair queuing (WFQ).

4.   A method according to claim 3, wherein the WFQ scheme selectively dismisses internet protocol (IP) packets having a lower priority in order to store more recently arrived IP packets having a higher priority.

5.   A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the network is an optical network.